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SUBJECT: FRANCE ON NATIONAL STRATEGY TO INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS
AGAINST KLEPTOCRACY

REF: STATE 131554

¶1. (U) Embassy raised reftel points on the National Strategy to Internationalize Efforts Against Kleptocracy with senior MFA officials, and is sharing points with Ministries of Finance and Justice. MFA DAS-equivalent for International Financial Affairs Cyrille Pierre told us the French stance on corruption had evolved considerably over the past several years and the GOF considers the fight against corruption a priority. The outcome of the recent peer evaluation of France in the OECD's anti-bribery working group attested to its efforts.

¶2. (U) Pierre said reftel concept of financial center partnerships working together to deny safe havens was "interesting" and, he thought, the GOF would be receptive to working together to flesh out the concept. He cautioned against any effort that would involve independently generating a "blacklist" of kleptocrats. It would be important that cooperation be geared towards denying access to kleptocrats who had been found guilty of impropriety by recognized bodies.

¶3. (SBU) In the spirit of reftel strategy, Pierre suggested there might be opportunities for France and the U.S. to coordinate existing anti-corruption efforts in the developing world. For example, there were only three countries in the African Union that had not implemented the UN Convention Against Corruption, he said. Coordinating demarches to those governments might be an effective means of underscoring the importance of the issue. France also was interested in pursuing more robust efforts to increase the transparency of off-shore financial centers, whether through ongoing work in the FATF, or under the auspices of the Anti-Bribery Convention.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: We would do well to pursue Pierre's suggestion of finding opportunities to coordinate messages on anti-corruption. A joint message might have particularly strong impact in France's traditional zone of influence. Post would be pleased to work with the Department and regional missions on such an effort.

HOFFMAN